

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) Whitened Individualized, whitened crosslinked cellulosic fluff pulp fibers, obtained by a method comprising:

 applying a whitening agent comprising one or more dyes, a crosslinking agent, and optionally a crosslinking catalyst to a web of fluff pulp fibers to provide a web of treated fibers;

 separating the web of treated fibers into individualized treated fibers; and

 heating the individualized treated fibers at a temperature and for a time sufficient to provide individualized, whitened crosslinked fluff pulp fibers.

2. (Original) The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the whitening agent comprises a blue dye.

3. (Original) The fibers of Claim 2, wherein the blue dye is an azo dye.

4. (Original) The fibers of Claim 2, wherein the blue dye is an azo metal complex dye.

5. (Original) The fibers of Claim 1, wherein the crosslinked cellulosic fibers comprise citric acid crosslinked cellulosic fibers.

6. (Currently amended) A method for making individualized, whitened crosslinked cellulosic fluff pulp fibers, comprising:

 applying a whitening agent comprising one or more dyes, a crosslinking agent, and optionally a crosslinking catalyst to a web of fluff pulp fibers to provide a web of treated fibers;

 separating the web of treated fibers into individualized treated fibers; and

 heating the individualized treated fibers at a temperature and for a time sufficient to provide individualized, whitened crosslinked fluff pulp fibers.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the whitening agent comprises a blue dye.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206 682.8100

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the blue dye is an azo dye.
9. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the blue dye is an azo metal complex dye.
10. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the crosslinking agent comprises citric acid.
11. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the crosslinking catalyst comprises sodium hypophosphite.
12. (Original) An absorbent product, comprising the fibers of Claim 1.
13. (Original) The product of Claim 12, wherein the product is a wipe, tissue, or towel.
14. (Original) The product of Claim 12, wherein the product is an infant diaper, adult incontinence product, or feminine hygiene product.

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CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100